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March 1, 1976

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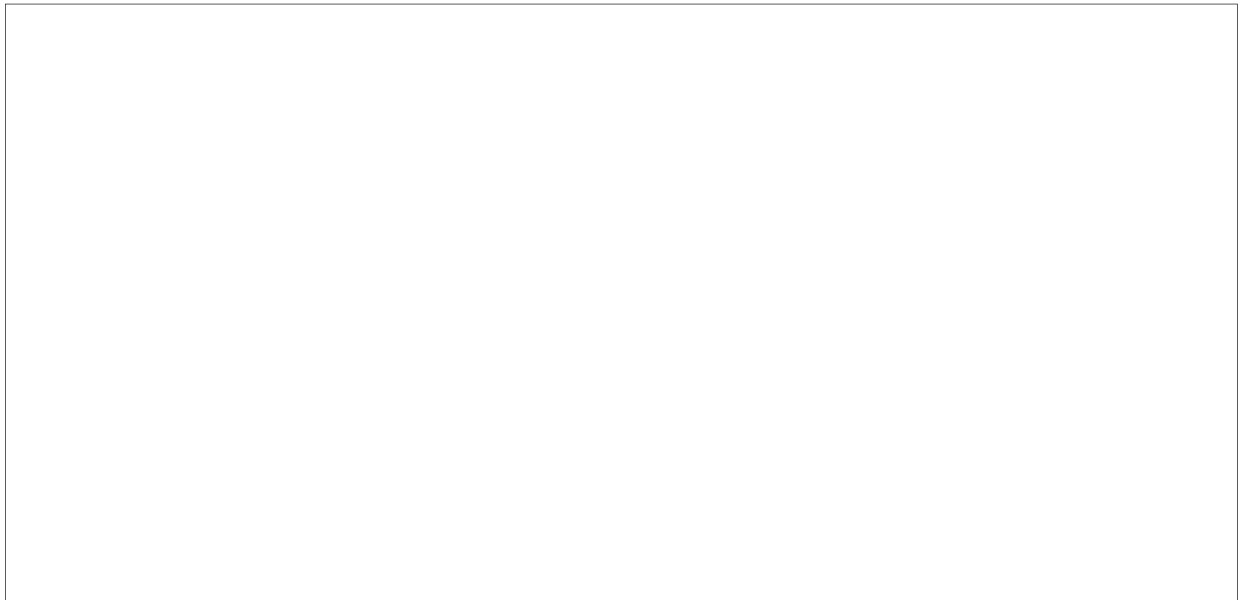
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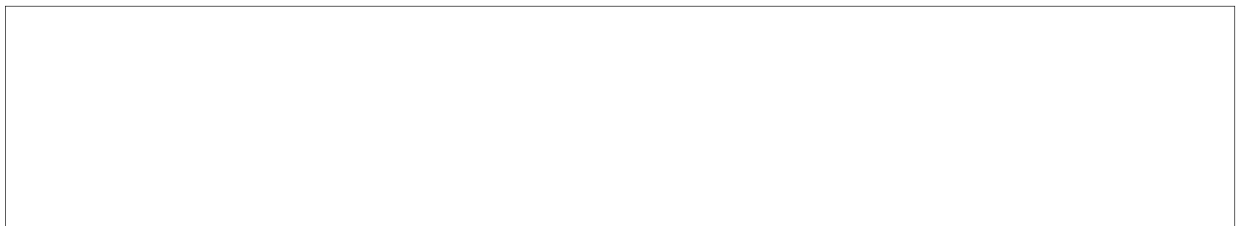
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March 1, 1976

ARGENTINA

A number of key congressmen have told the US embassy in Buenos Aires that a military coup against President Peron is now inevitable.

The congressmen point out that the proposed attempt by the legislature to unseat Peron would be difficult. Moreover, the congressmen doubt that breakaway Peronists would actually vote to depose Peron. Just last week the dissident Peronists helped defeat an impeachment measure.

There has been no reaction to the government's new economic proposals, issued last Friday. There is, however, no reason to expect that the new plan, which calls for new wage and price measures, will be enough to thwart a coup attempt.

It appears likely that, in the event of a coup, army Commander in Chief General Videla would be named president by a military junta. Civilians probably prefer Videla because he resisted early calls for a military take-over and is widely considered a man of moderate political views.

In the event of a coup, political parties and labor groups would remain largely unchanged. According to one report, national elections, set for late this year, would be canceled, and congress would be closed. In the event of serious setbacks for the new government, however, Videla might be pressured by his more aggressive military colleagues for still more stringent policies.

Recent reporting indicates that the cabinet would be dominated by the military. Army General Harguindeguy and Admiral Montes are said to be in line to take over the interior and foreign relations ministries. The Ministry of Economy might go to another army general or possibly to a conservative civilian economist. All current indications are that a military government would seek harmonious relations with the US. []

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